

East or West, unions are best

West - safety reps on blacklist

East - deaths in non-union factory

Union workplaces are safer workplaces

End Blacklisting in UK

Join the campaign against blacklisting. Blacklisting is a secretive and malicious practice that ruins lives. Individuals have been denied work in the construction industry and beyond, unable to see the information compiled about them and powerless to challenge this.

Ask your MP to sign Early Day Motion 609. Just 5 minutes of your time can help secure justice for thousands of workers denied employment in construction, as a result of blacklisting. Many were blacklisted after raising legitimate health and safety concerns, in an industry where 39 workers died in accidents at work last year. Send a postcard to or email your MP asking them to sign Steve Rotheram's Early Day Motion 609.

This EDM calls for:

- A public inquiry into the blacklisting scandal
- Blacklisting to be a criminal offence.
- The Information Commissioner's Office to inform all individuals who appear on blacklists.
- Compensation for victims of blacklisting.
- Companies guilty of blacklisting to be barred from tendering for public contracts.

Send a postcard to your MP

Not sure who your MP is? Check online at:
<http://findyourmp.parliament.uk>
or ring 020 7219 4272.

Bangladesh factory collapse

On 24 April, at least 1,127 Bangladeshi garment workers were killed when a factory making garments for several top global brands collapsed.

Safety was non-existent and unions were not allowed. When cracks appeared in the building, the owner ignored workers' pleas and insisted that work continued, leading to the collapse.

Over 30 top retailers then signed a major safety deal, the Accord on Fire and Building Safety, brokered by global Unions along with labour rights groups e.g. the Clean Clothes Campaign. More have joined since.

However, GAP and Wal-Mart (which in this country means Asda) refuse to join this Accord: they say they want to create their own, but there is little faith that theirs would have any teeth at all.

In a mounting campaign, pressure is being put on top clothing firms. Ways are being sought to improve conditions without threatening jobs. So far, improvements in Bangladesh include:

- moves to raise the minimum wage in the industry
- easing of rules on unionisation
- Accord gives the right to refuse dangerous work

What can we do?

West Midlands Hazards Trust was among groups and individuals involved in the campaign, who were invited to speak at a recent meeting in Lozells.

The plan is to develop a local campaign, linked with the global campaign, to see what more can be done. Please get in touch for more information or if you would like to be added to a contact list for this campaign.



Bangladesh—Image: AP



Construction deaths

Construction unions have welcomed provisional figures published by the Health and Safety Executive which show a 20% reduction in construction deaths.

The figures published by the HSE show that in 2012/13 there were 39 fatal accidents involving construction workers, compared to 48 construction fatalities in 2011/12. In 2012/13 the HSE have also recorded 5 deaths of the public due to construction accidents.

The reduction in construction deaths is good news. However 1 death, let alone 39, is far too many. Workers are still being killed when the construction output is at its lowest level for a generation. It is essential that everyone involved in construction - the employers, the Government, unions & the HSE - work together to ensure that deaths are further reduced and that the industry becomes safe for all workers.

There are still grave concerns that as the industry begins to recover from recession and new workers and companies enter the industry, deaths will increase. Following previous recessions and recoveries, fatality rates have increased markedly.

Fatalities could be made far worse due to Government policies. By 2015 the HSE's budget will have been cut by 35%, which has led to it significantly reducing its activities. The Government has constantly attacked existing safety regulations, as part of its "deregulation" and "anti red tape" agenda.

The Government's policies are making workplaces more dangerous. Safety laws are being cut and inspections are being reduced. Employers who ignore safety laws know they are unlikely to be caught.

This will increase workplace dangers, especially as the industry becomes busier.

I/we want to support the work of the West Midlands Hazards Trust:

- I would like to join the West Midlands Hazards Trust, please send me a membership form
- I would like more information about the work of the Trust
- I would like to make a donation towards the work of the Trust (Please make cheques payable to the West Midlands Hazards Centre)

Hazards Trust needs you!

Successful Funding Bid - Safety Net project

Great news! West Midlands Hazards Trust has been successful in an application for funding from Awards for All (A4A), the small grants section of the Big Lottery fund. This enables us to build a website for the Trust, be trained in networking and other ICT skills, and engage in wider activities for a safer and healthier region. The project will be put in place over the next year.

Opportunity - we need you!

We welcome your involvement in this project, even if you only have a very small amount of time to offer. We are part of the national Hazards Campaign. If you support our aims, of educating more people to prevent occupational deaths, illness and disease and provide support for those individuals and families affected, we need you. Part of the Safety Net project is to involve more people, some as volunteers e.g. to update the website or keep an eye on social networking. Hope to hear from you. Training and support will be provided if needed; or maybe we can benefit from your skills, knowledge or expertise.

Asbestos work

This is the second time we've secured funding from A4A. First time was to set up what was then a new project, now our respected arm: Asbestos Support West Midlands. ASWM now has its own paid staff, website and range of support, information, activities and campaigns. Read the latest Asbestos Support newsletter for more details, e.g. how to support the campaign for justice in the Mesothelioma Bill 2013. ASWM Website is www.asbestlossupportwm.org.

Join Hazards Trust

Use the form below if you'd like to join or learn more. This is an important time to extend our work beyond the asbestos diseases issue to other work-related conditions. It's also an important time to defend safe working conditions when hard-won rights are under attack. Individuals or organisations e.g. Union branches can join — details on membership form. See below.

- I would like to sign up for the email list and receive regular updates on the work of the Trust

Name:
 Address:

 Telephone:
 Email:

I enclose a cheque for £ _____

The West Midlands Hazards Trust

The West Midlands Hazards Trust
 138 Digbeth, Birmingham, B5 6DR
 Email hazardsinfo@wmht.co.uk Telephone: 0121 678 8853

